

Internal Migration to and from Somerset

Each year, the Office for National Statistics (ONS) publishes estimates of internal migration¹ moves broken down by age and sex at country, region and local authority level for England and Wales. As there is no single system to record population movements within England and Wales, internal migration estimates must be derived from proxy sources. The ONS uses three administrative data sources:-

- the National Health Service Central Register (NHSCR),
- the Patient Register Data System (PRDS) and
- the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA).

Overall, the accuracy of NHS based data depends on patients re-registering with a new doctor when they change residence or informing their current GP of any change of residential address. It is known that re-registration rates vary by sex and age group.

The combination of data sources ensures that the majority of moves are covered for England and Wales. However, given that not all moves are covered there will be some error around these estimates to the level of detail provided; that is, age groups within local authorities.

Understanding internal migration is an important element in estimating overall estimates of the population at local and national level, building upon known birth and death statistics and estimates of international migration.

Key messages

- ◆ Internal migration from within Britain is a major element in Somerset's increasing population.
- ◆ Somerset experiences a net flow of migrants from other parts of England and Wales, especially from some neighbouring districts, the South East and London.
- ◆ However, there is a consistent net flow of 16-24 year-olds out of Somerset, particularly to London and university towns such as Bristol, Plymouth, Cardiff and Bournemouth. This has implications for the future economic development of the county as there is a dwindling resource of young people to generate income.
- ◆ In the year to June 2011, six in seven moves out of Somerset districts by 16-24s were away from the county.
- ◆ In the same period, Sedgemoor had the highest number of net inward internal migrants of any Somerset district, as it did the previous year, while only West Somerset had a net flow away from its borders.

¹ Internal migration represents movements within England and Wales, as opposed to international migration to and from other nations

Somerset

The 2011 mid-year population estimate for Somerset released in September 2012 is 531,581, indicating a rise of around 1,600 in the three months following Census Day. A large proportion of this estimated gain is attributed to net inward migration, much of it from other parts of Britain. In this respect, Somerset follows a similar pattern to that of similar rural counties in the South West such as Devon, Cornwall, Wiltshire and North Somerset.

In the year ending June 2011, there were an estimated 36,150 people moving into or out of Somerset, a rate of approximately 68 per 1000 population. This rate is in line with other large rural shire counties such as Cornwall, Lincolnshire, Shropshire, Nottinghamshire and Gloucestershire but below counties including Wiltshire, Dorset, Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire and especially university cities such as Bristol, Plymouth, Exeter and Bournemouth.

The net flow into Somerset (the number coming in, less the number going out) from other parts of England and Wales increased from 1,630 in 2008-09 and 2009-10 to 2,210 in 2010-11. However, the pattern is not consistent for each of the five constituent districts (see Table 1 below)

Table 1: Internal migration flows for each district within Somerset, 2010-11

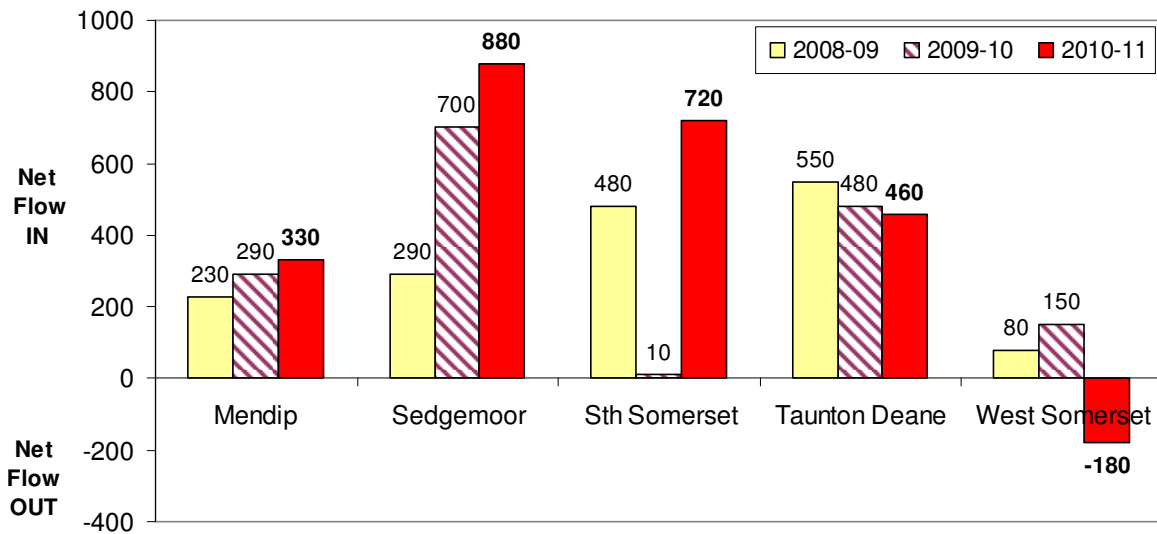
	Mendip	Sedge-moor	South Somerset	Taunton Deane	West Somerset	Less inter-District moves	Somerset
Flow In	5530	5310	6970	5350	1790	5770	19180
Flow Out	5200	4430	6250	4890	1970	5770	16970
Net In	330	880	720	460	-180		2210

Source: Office for National Statistics

Please note that almost a quarter of internal migration for the five districts occurs within Somerset; in other words, only between these districts. Indeed, all of West Somerset's net flow out of the district is the result of moves to Sedgemoor, Taunton Deane and South Somerset.

Three of the districts in Somerset show a consistent net inflow of migrants from other parts of England and Wales in recent years, but the picture is less stable in South Somerset and West Somerset (see Chart 1).

Chart 1: Trends in Net Internal Migration by District, 2008-9 to 2010-11, all ages

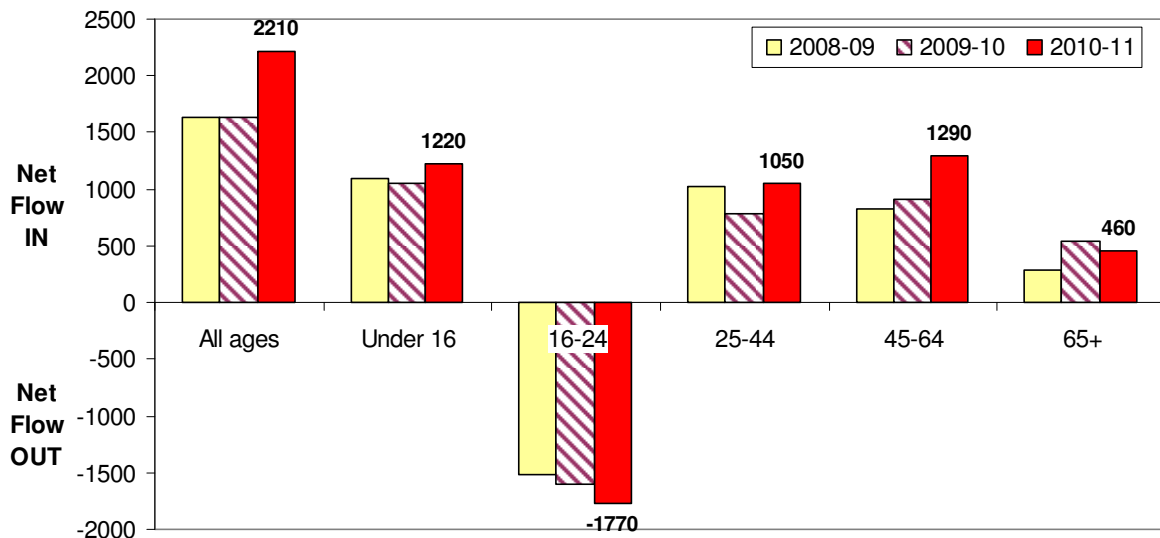


Source: Office for National Statistics

Age Groups

The overall figures also mask notable differences between age groups. In particular, there is a consistent net flow out of Somerset amongst 16-24 year-olds (see Chart 2).

Chart 2: Trends in Net Internal Migration by Age Group, Somerset, 2008-9 to 2010-11



Source: Office for National Statistics

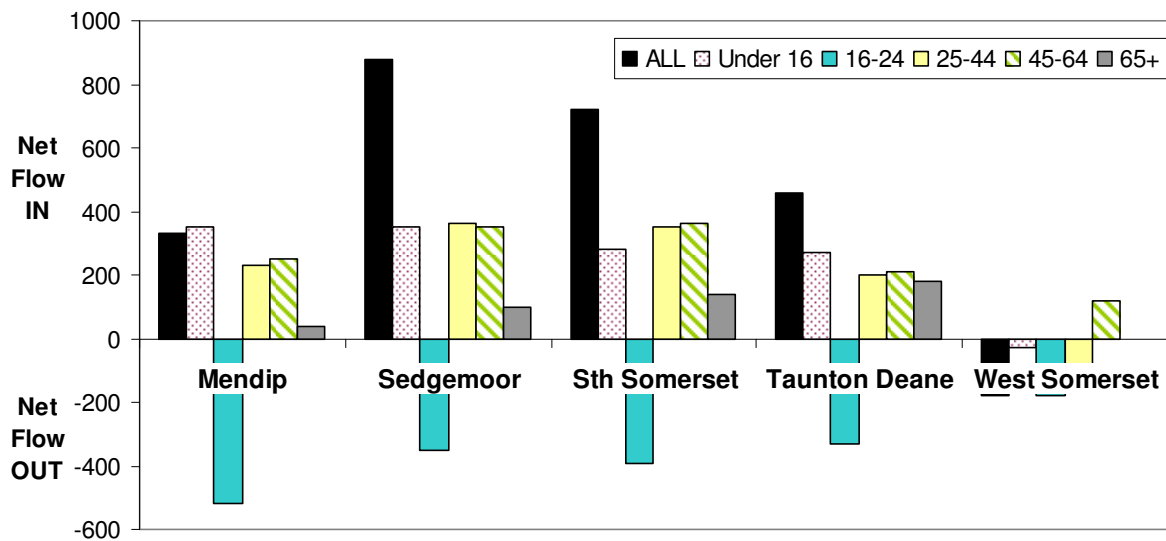
The situation with 16-24s is probably because there is no university based in the county. Wiltshire, North Somerset, Dorset and Devon experience the same phenomenon, whilst those with universities - Bristol, Bournemouth, Plymouth and Bath & NE Somerset - have a net inflow of young people.

Whilst there is anecdotal evidence that many who leave for university do return in later life, this internal emigration does contribute to Somerset's decreasing number of working

age people as a proportion of the population. This, in turn, poses a challenge to filling local job vacancies arising from future economic regeneration.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, the greatest overall flow of internal migration occurs amongst the 25-44 age group, with the smallest flow amongst those aged 65 or more. However, when it comes to net changes, there is little difference across the county between the four youngest age groups. Nevertheless amongst 16-24s there is a net flow out of each of the five districts.

Chart 3: Net Internal Migration by Age Group and District, 2010-11



Source: Office for National Statistics

As mentioned earlier, about a quarter of people moving into one of Somerset's five districts have moved from one of the other districts within the county. This is true of most age groups, the exception being the 16-24s, where the proportion is under one in five. The range is greater as a proportion of those moving out of a Somerset district. More than one in three under-16s leaving a district remain in the county, but amongst the 16-24 age group, it is only one in seven (see Table 2).

Table 2: Internal migration flows for each district within Somerset, 2010-11

	Total flow IN	Total flow OUT	Flows Within County	Within county as % of total IN flow	Within county as % of total OUT flow
Under 16	4,700	3,480	1,250	27	36
16-24	5,090	6,860	990	19	14
25-44	7,730	6,680	1,780	23	27
45-64	5,010	3,720	1,200	24	32
65+	2,450	1,990	550	22	28
All Ages	24,980	22,730	5,770	23	25

Source: Office for National Statistics

Where do they go to and come from?

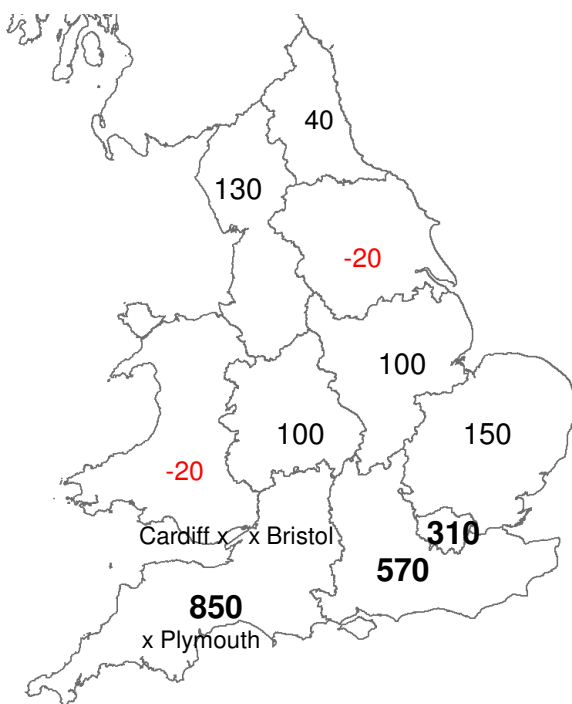
From most parts of England and Wales there is a net migration into Somerset. The largest single contributor is, unsurprisingly, the South West region, extending to Gloucestershire in the north and Swindon and Bournemouth in the east. The second highest net migration flow into Somerset comes from the South East. Only Wales and Yorkshire & Humberside experience a net movement from Somerset, albeit marginal (see Chart 4).

There are notable net flows from BaNES (mostly to Mendip), West Devon (mainly to Taunton Deane) and West Dorset (to South Somerset).

Amongst the 16-24 age group, there is a net migration out of Somerset to Wales and every region of England. In addition to the South West, the main net destination regions are London, South East and Wales (see Chart 5).

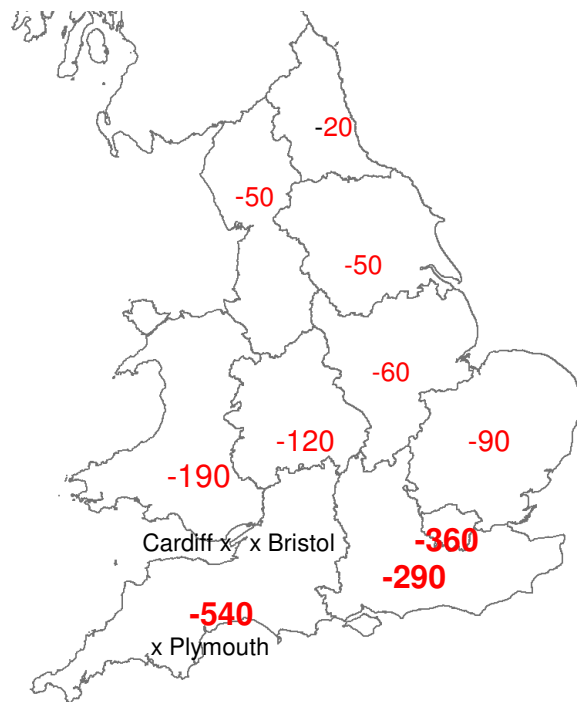
Further to the capital, there are relatively high net movements of young people from Somerset to Bristol, Plymouth, Cardiff, Bournemouth and Oxford.

Chart 4: Net Migration to Somerset by Region, All Ages



- denotes net flow out of Somerset

Chart 5: Net Migration to Somerset by Region, 16-24 age group



Source: Office for National Statistics

Issues by District

Mendip

- There is a slight recent upward trend in net inward migration from other parts of England and Wales to 330 in 2010-11, mostly from neighbouring BaNES.
- There is a net inward flow amongst all age groups except the 16-24s.
- There is a small net flow of people from Mendip to other parts of the county, predominantly South Somerset.
- The other main net destination is Wiltshire.

Sedgemoor

- Sedgemoor has the highest net inward migration from other parts of England and Wales of any district in Somerset, despite having the fewest moves within the county.
- The most common origin of net incomers is North Somerset, followed by West Somerset, Bristol, Taunton Deane and Birmingham
- There is a net inward flow amongst all age groups except the 16-24s
- There is a small net flow of young people from Sedgemoor to London, Plymouth and Bristol.

South Somerset

- After a neutral flow of people in and out in the previous year, South Somerset experienced a net inward internal migration flow in 2010-11. It had the highest level of total internal migration of any district in Somerset, as befitting the one with the highest population.
- A relatively large number of internal migrants came across the Dorset border, especially from West Dorset. Other notable origins include London and Mendip.
- There is a net inward flow amongst all age groups except the 16-24s
- While there was a net flow of people generally from London, there was a similar net flow in the opposite direction amongst the 16-24 age group. Other destinations include Bournemouth and Bristol.

Taunton Deane

- For the third year running, Taunton Deane has a net inward internal migration of around 500 people.
- A substantial number of these originated in Devon, particularly Mid-Devon. Others came from West Somerset and South Somerset
- There is a net inward flow amongst all age groups except the 16-24s but Taunton Deane has the highest net inflow of older people (aged 65+) of any district in the county.
- There is a small net flow of young people from Taunton Deane to London.

West Somerset

- Alone amongst the county's districts, West Somerset has a net internal migration away from its borders, predominantly to neighbours Sedgemoor and Taunton Deane.
- The other most common origin of net incomers is London.
- Only amongst the 45-64 age group is there a net flow of migrants from other parts of England and Wales into West Somerset. This group also had the highest net inward flow in 2009-10.
- No area stood out as being a main destination for net leavers aged 16-24.

Further information

Office for National Statistics – Internal Migration by Local Authorities in England and Wales, Year Ending June 2011

<http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/migration1/internal-migration-by-local-authorities-in-england-and-wales/2010-2011/internal-migration-by-local-authorities-in-england-and-wales-in-the-year-ending-june-2011.html#tab-Key-Figures>

Somerset Intelligence Network (SINe): www.sine.org.uk

Written by Mike Smith
Partnership Intelligence Unit at Somerset County Council
Tel. 01823 355589
mjsmith@somerset.gov.uk